FM 3-0:
Doctrine for a Transforming Force

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ON 14 JUNE 2001, the U.S. Army released its new operations manual, U.S. Army Field Manual (FM) 3-0, *Operations*.[1] This edition supersedes the 1993 edition of FM 100-5.[2] It is number 14 in a series of Army field service regulations dating back to 1905 that provide basic operational doctrine for Army forces. FM 3-0 complements and expands on the Army doctrine contained in FM 1, *The Army*, also released on 14 June 2001.[3] As the Army's keystone doctrinal manual, FM 3-0 establishes a foundation for developing the tactics, techniques, and procedures detailed in other Army manuals.

Publishing both of the Army's top-end doctrinal manuals is not only unusual it is also unique. Typically, the revision and publication of FM 1 and FM 3-0 proceeded independently and out of cycle, as was the case with publishing FM 100-5 in June 1993 and FM 100-1 in June 1994.[4] This time, however, the coincidence of Army transformation, ongoing joint doctrine revision, and the decision to rewrite FM 100-5 precipitated a major doctrinal shift.[5] FM 1 and FM 3-0 herald a top-to-bottom revision of Army doctrine that supports Army transformation. This revision is already well under way with the first of the supporting doctrinal publications, FM 3-90, *Tactics*, appearing in July 2001.[6] Additional supporting publications, such as FM 6-0, *Command and Control*, and FM 3-13, *Information Operations*, are nearing completion. FM 3-06, *Urban Operations*; FM 3-07, *Stability Operations and Support Operations*; FM 5-0, *Army Planning and Orders Production*; and FM 7-15, *Army Universal Task List*, are in draft for Armywide staffing.[7] Similar efforts are under way to rewrite FM 1-0, *Personnel*; FM 2-0, *Intelligence Operations*; FM 4-0, *Combat Service Support*; and FM 7-0, *Training the Force*.[8] With this magnitude of doctrinal shift under way, this article places FM 3-0 in context and provides some insights

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into not only the doctrine contained in FM 3-0 but also why it has changed and the significance of the change. It examines the major conceptual changes in the doctrine.

Whether one fully embraces the changes to Army keystone doctrine or not, comparing the new FM 3-0 with previous editions reveals a major shift in Army doctrine, arguably as significant as adopting AirLand Battle in 1982. Changes in content and context bear this out. This is the first edition of the operations manual to appear under the aegis of a mature and authoritative joint body of doctrine.[9] For the first time, it defines Army mission-essential tasks lists (METLs), the operational expression of the Army core competencies found in FM 1. Additionally, FM 3-0 recognizes a profound shift in the operational environment and examines the increased complexity of modern operations from that perspective. In consonance with Army transformation, FM 3-0 recognizes that Army forces must be strategically responsive, not just deploying faster. To a greater degree than almost any doctrine since the Korean war, this doctrine is offensive, stressing operations that are more nonlinear and simultaneous. It discusses and illustrates operations conducted throughout expanded and noncontiguous areas of operations (AOs).

Army operations are full spectrum, spanning decisive action in major theater war, peacetime military engagement, and domestic support activities. FM 3-0 is commander focused and expands the importance of battle command—the ability to visualize, describe, direct, lead, and continually assess

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operations. Information technologies powerfully influence how commanders conceptualize the battlespace, how they plan and operate, and how they engage adversaries. The manual retains and restates hard-won lessons from 226 years of Army experience, revising and reapplying them in old and new ways. So, while it represents a significant shift in doctrine, it would be wrong to label the new edition as being revolutionary. Undoubtedly, some question the timing and argue that it may have been better for the Army to wait for the new administration's defense review results.

It is illuminating to review where the Army has been since FM 100-5 appeared in 1993. Following Operation Desert Storm, force projection and major regional contingencies against conventional threats were paramount strategic planning considerations. Hurricane Andrew relief efforts in south Florida had just ended. The Soviet Union dismembered itself in late 1991 and early 1992, but the extent to which that superpower's military power would devolve remained unknown. In late 1992, Operation Restore Hope in Somalia had yet to deteriorate. And the Army was in the midst of a massive reduction from its peak cold war strength. While the 1993 version was prescient in its emphasis on force projection and battle command, it could not envision the events in Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, central Africa, and other contingencies. Nor could the doctrine authors foresee the astonishing advances in information technology or the degree to which U.S. conventional forces would dominate the military environment following the Soviet Union's collapse. Clearly, doctrine developed to fight against Soviet forces or surrogates was obsolete at best, completely outdated at worst.

The new operations manual postulates no single threat. Rather, it describes a range of threat characteristics and likely modus operandi. The unifying theme emerging from discussion is that U.S. adversaries are neither stupid nor complacent. They recognize that joint U.S. forces will dominate any conventional engagement unless they can find ways to nullify or bypass our strengths. Thus, FM 3-0 discusses asymmetry, urban operations, the continued threat of weapons of mass destruction, and the two-way street of technology. These ideas will drive the way we present potential adversaries in exercises and training. But there is a larger impetus evident in the manual's tone. The U.S. Army is now the premier land force in the world; its capabilities present almost insuperable challenges to any opponent. Consequently, this is a fundamentally offensive doctrine, and that is captured immediately in the foreword written by the Chief of Staff, U.S. Army: "Warfighting, and by extension less violent actions, depends on a few 'rules of thumb.' First, we win on the offense; we must be able to defend well, but you win on the offense. Next we want to initiate combat on our terms—at a time, in a place, and with a method of our choosing. Third, we want to gain the initiative and retain it—never surrender it if possible. Fourth, we want to build momentum quickly. And finally we want to win—decisively."[10]

In his study of the process and outcome of the work to revise FM 100-5, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) historian John Romjue characterized the 1993 book as "doctrine for the post-cold war world."[11] The new FM 3-0 captures the experiential period of the intervening years. It is not cold war doctrine, nor is it even post-cold war doctrine. This is new. This is doctrine for an Army in the midst of transforming to a strategically responsive, full-spectrum force; one that is meeting today's deterrence, engagement, and support missions; and one that is ready, when necessary, to fight and win—decisively. The doctrine is neither strategy-specific nor keyed to some particular force size or echelon. Rather, FM 3-0 solidifies Army experience and Army conceptual thinking into a basic document that should serve the force over the next 4 to 7 years.

To understand what role FM 3-0 plays in transformation, we must consider that it has to serve three different Army forces. The first is the existing force that makes up most of the Army. These units, both heavy and light, are incrementally improved versions of the force that fought in Desert Storm 11 years ago. They may have modest numbers of im-

M1A1 Abrams and AH-64A Apaches of the 1st Armored Division coordinate their fire at a range in Glamoc, Bosnia.

US Army

Close combat is necessary if the enemy is skilled and resolute; fires alone will neither drive him from his position nor convince him to abandon his cause. Ultimately, the outcome of battles, major operations, and campaigns depends on the ability of Army forces to close with and destroy the enemy. During offensive and defensive operations, the certainty of destruction may persuade the enemy to yield. In stability operations, close combat dominance is the principal means Army forces use to influence adversary actions.

proved systems, and some are receiving suites of improved command and control (C2) equipment, But for the most part, they are familiar organizations whose designs and purposes trace back through the cold war to World War II. This force is hardly obsolete; it makes up the Army's principal striking power and provides the conventional hedge against the outbreak of major theater war.

The second force is much more extensively modernized—the so-called digitized force. These units are just beginning to reach war readiness after years of experimentation. Although still maturing, they already demonstrate capabilities that change the tactical nature of operations. Finally, the interim force appeared in the inventory. This force is entirely new and represents the first Army formations designed for the complex operational environment of the early 21st century. FM 3-0 provides the doctrine that is suited for these forces; even so, it also looks ahead. Even as it captures how we do things now, FM 3-0 pulls the Army toward Objective Force operations.

The latter point is important. Although it is forward looking, FM 3-0 is not doctrine for the Ob-

jective Force. The combination of immediate relevancy and forward focus circumscribes its shelf life. It will serve the Army only until its successor addresses advanced operations conducted by objective forces. Today's edition addresses operations conducted by less modernized forces, modernized and digitally enhanced forces, and interim forces. But it also introduces operational concepts that herald capabilities that only the most modernized Army units may exploit. In so doing, it pulls the entire force toward Objective Force operations—operations that will feature extraordinarily versatile and lethal forces with future combat systems, extremely advanced C2 systems, and a degree of joint integration well beyond that possible today.

Together with FM 1, FM 3-0 initiates a doctrinal numbering system that parallels the joint doctrine numbering convention. Aside from the obvious ease with which joint and Army planners can refer to supporting doctrine, this signifies the Army's maturing role in joint operations. This edition of the Army operations manual is the first written to support an authoritative and mature body of joint

doctrine. More important, it is written from the position that Army forces act as part of a joint force, neither more nor less important than the other services' forces. The manual states: "Army forces may be the supported force for some portions of a joint operation and be the supporting force in others."[12] FM 3-0 describes Army forces in unified action—the part of the joint forces that often includes mul-

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tinational forces and interagency elements. It recognizes that Army forces are an indispensable component of most joint forces and will be the decisive component of sustained land warfare. But it does not, as in the past, proceed from an underlying assumption that Army units are the sole basis of decisions made within a campaign. Implicit in the Army's maturing as a component of a joint force is that this relationship is mutually complementary. Army forces depend on the other services for enablers necessary to conduct full-spectrum operations just as the other services require Army forces to realize the full potential of joint operations. While FM 3-0 is indisputably about Army operations, it still recognizes and affirms the enduring qualities of land forces. The manual states, "Army forces make permanent the otherwise temporary effect of fires alone."[13]

The Army METL provides the operational expression of the Army core competencies discussed in FM 1.[14] The Army METL includes shaping the security environment, responding promptly to crises, mobilizing the Army, conducting forcible entry operations, dominating land operations, and providing support to civil authorities. Framing the Army's fundamental contributions to national security as mission-essential tasks permits FM 3-0 to establish the link from operations to Army force responsiveness and hence to training. For the first time, the operations manual states that units focus their training

on warfighting tasks unless a senior commander—three-star or higher—directs otherwise.[15]

A theme initiated in discussing Army METL and carried forward is Army forces' need to close with and destroy the enemy. FM 3-0 emphasizes the complementary nature of fires and maneuver and reiterates that relationship. It contains an interesting discussion of the element of combat power: "All tactical actions inevitably require seizing or securing terrain as a means to an end or an end in itself. Close combat is necessary if the enemy is skilled and resolute; fires alone will neither drive him from his position nor convince him to abandon his cause. Ultimately, the outcome of battles, major operations, and campaigns depends on the ability of Army forces to close with and destroy the enemy. During offensive and defensive operations, the certainty of destruction may persuade the enemy to yield. In stability operations, close combat dominance is the principal means Army forces use to influence adversary actions. In all cases, the ability of Army forces to engage in close combat, combined with their willingness to do so, is the decisive factor in defeating an enemy or controlling a situation."[16]

FM 3-0 moves beyond war and military operations other than war (MOOTW) to the complex challenges of today's operating environment. It establishes full-spectrum operations as a flexible means of conceptualizing what the Army does during peace, conflict, and war. Every operation is a combination of the following types of military operations: offensive, defensive, stability, and support. Offensive operations are decisive; they destroy or defeat an enemy. Their purpose is to impose U.S.

Military Operations	General U.S. Goal		Offense	Defense	Stability	Support
War	*Fight and win war*	M T W				B A S E D
Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW)	*Deter war and resolve conflict*	S S C				O N
	Promote peace	P M E				N E E D

MTW— major theater of war
SSC— smaller-scale contingency
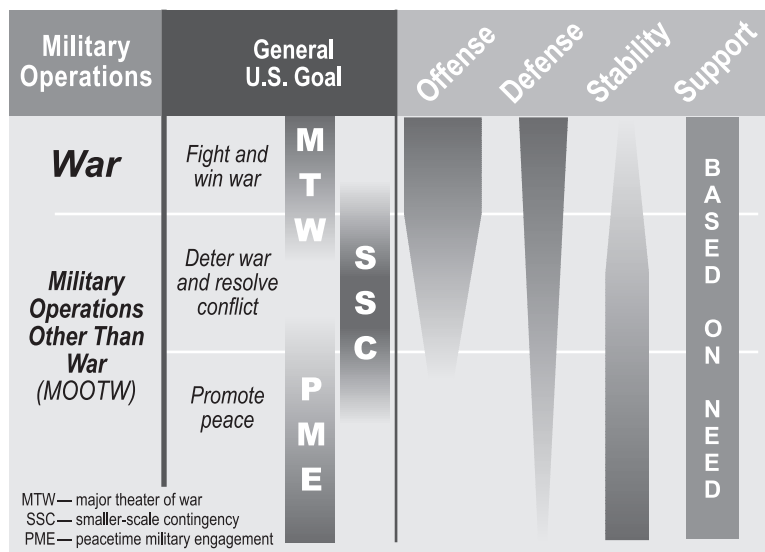PME— peacetime military engagement

Figure 1. Range of Army Operations

will on the enemy and win—decisively. Defensive operations defeat an attack, buy time, economize forces, or develop favorable conditions for offensive operations. Stability operations include such activities as peace operations, noncombatant evacuation, and foreign internal defense. Stability operations also address the vital role that Army forces play in peacetime military engagements to improve international relationships and moderate factors that could explode into crises. Support operations describe how Army forces respond to disaster and domestic requirements, the latter in support of civil authorities.

Examined individually, these types of operations are not new. What is new is recognizing that, increasingly, these operations are interrelated and make up land operations. Versatile, adaptive Army forces combine and transition between and among these operations throughout a campaign, major operation, or other mission.

Offensive, defensive, stability, and support operations are not intended to supplant war and MOOTW at the operational level. Rather, FM 3-0 defines a range of operations that Army forces conduct to support a joint campaign. It captures the requirements of today's land operations where there is no clear demarcation between war and MOOTW. For Army forces, credibility in peacekeeping operations stems first and foremost from the potential enemy's certain conviction that the U.S. Army would defeat them if the situation resulted in combat. Conversely, Army forces may conduct a major offensive operation within which designated Army forces support displaced civilians and local populations. In this re-spect, doctrine reconciles operational experience with the conceptual basis for envisioning and teaching land operations. Consequently, both Army doctrine and transformation plans stress the requirement

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for Army forces to transition rapidly and effectively between types of operations to maintain the momentum of the campaign.

Army doctrine addresses full-spectrum operations across the spectrum of conflict as shown in Figure 1. Army commanders at all echelons may combine different types of operations simultaneously and sequentially to accomplish missions in war and MOOTW. For each mission, the joint forces commander (JFC) and Army component commander determine the emphasis Army forces place on each operation. Offensive and defensive operations normally dominate military operations in war and some smaller-scale contingencies (SSCs). Stability operations and support operations predominate in MOOTW that include certain SSCs and peacetime military engagements (PMEs).[17]

The complex nature of ground operations today requires a more flexible battlefield organization than the cold war construct of close, deep, and rear operations. FM 3-0 provides a purpose-based battlefield organization that uses decisive, shaping, and sustaining operations as shown in Figure 2. This permits our view of operations to accommodate increasingly simultaneous and nonlinear operations conducted in greater depth than ever before in noncontiguous AOs. It also extends the battlefield organization down to lower echelons, which is necessary, given the range of SSCs that require
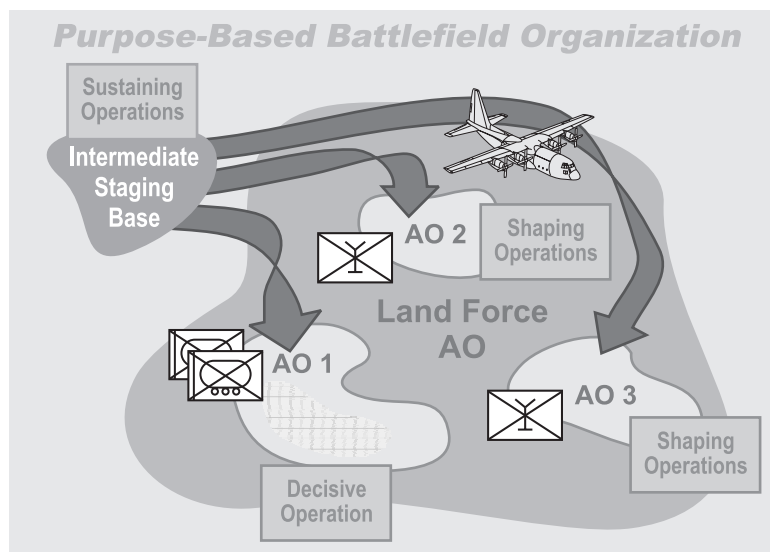

Figure 2. Example of Nonlinear, Noncontiguous Offensive Operations

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Army forces.[18] In adapting a purpose-based framework, FM 3-0 retains the older deep, close, and rear organization but assigns them strictly spatial qualities in terms of areas. Deep, close, and rear areas help commanders describe where shaping, decisive, and sustaining operations may occur, particularly in operations characterized by linear action and contiguous AOs.

Strategic responsiveness is a primary theme of FM 3-0. Strategic responsiveness is more than simply deploying faster. It includes generating, training, swiftly deploying, and simultaneously employing the right forces at the time and place the JFC requires them. It is about giving the JFC options in using decisive land power while creating operational dilemmas for the adversary. The message here is both internal and external. Internally, it provides the doctrinal basis for changing the Army's mind-set toward Army transformation. Externally, it rein-

forces to JFCs the complementary nature of air, land, and sea operations.

Advances in information technology are changing the way Army forces operate, just as information technology continues to change every aspect of society. FM 3-0 shifts Army doctrine forward through two related concepts. First, the manual adds information as an element of combat power—joining leadership, firepower, maneuver, and protection. Information is both a powerful enabler and a tool that creates the conditions for decisive action.[19] Information superiority, then, becomes a vital objective of operations. To deliver a decisive combination of combat power, Army forces must see, understand, and act before making contact with the enemy. This requires combinations of several things—intelligence, reconnaissance, and surveillance to see the situation; information management to provide the right information to the right people at the right time; and information operations to distort and disrupt the opponent's understanding of the situation while protecting our own—all linked through sophisticated information systems.

But, as history instructs, information technology may stifle as easily as it encourages initiative. Hence, FM 3-0 includes cautions as well: "Information technology can reduce, but not eliminate, uncertainty. It gives commanders windows of opportunity that, with quick and decisive action, help them seize the initiative. Commanders may lose opportunities if the quest for certainty leads them to centralize control and decision making. Technologically assisted situational understanding may tempt senior leaders to micromanage subordinate actions. This is not new; the telegraph and the command helicopter created similar tensions. Senior commanders need to develop command styles that exploit information technology while allowing subordinates authority to accomplish their missions. Exploiting the capabilities of information technology demands well-trained leaders willing to take risks within the bounds of the commander's intent. An understanding of the capabilities and limitations of information technology mitigates those risks."[20]

The Army views land warfare as intensely human, and FM 3-0 emphasizes the art of operations throughout. Soldiers execute op-
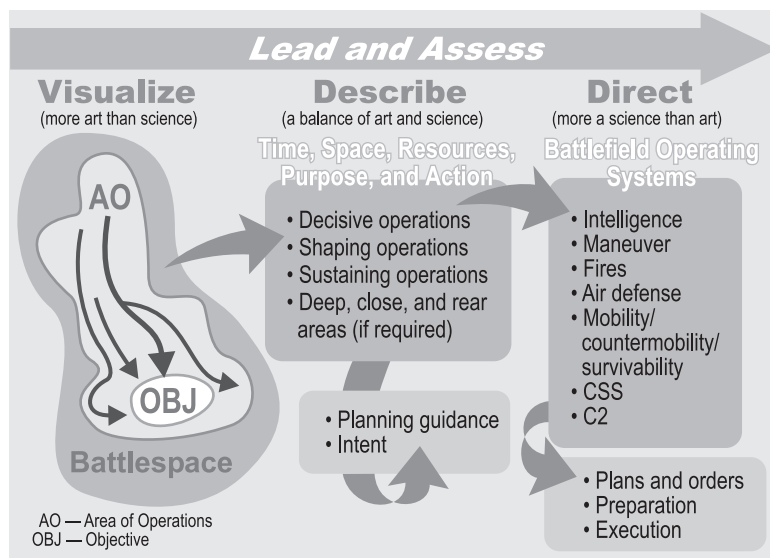

Figure 3. Battle Command: Visualize-Describe-Direct

erations. Commanders provide the impetus for planning, preparing, executing, and assessing operations. Their ability to successfully command land forces depends on how well they master the art and apply the science of war.

Because of this, the battle command concept receives considerable attention. As shown in Figure 3, FM 3-0 retains the emphasis on leadership while offering a new model for battle command—one that requires commanders to visualize operations, describe their vision to subordinates, and direct operations to conclusion. Throughout, commanders lead soldiers and assess the situation. The new model recognizes that in an increasingly simultaneous, noncontiguous environment, the commander must establish and update a mental picture of the battlespace to truly communicate his intent. Perhaps more important, an informed mental vision of the operation permits the commander to be proactive, to fully exploit the power of C2 technology, and act rather than wait to be surprised by events and cursed with missed opportunity.

FM 3-0 concludes with a chapter on combat service support (CSS) that emphasizes the evolving concept of CSS reach operations: "Combat service support reach operations involve the operational positioning and efficient use of all available CSS assets and capabilities, from the industrial base to the soldier in the field."[21] CSS reach operations focus on logistic efficiencies, not just for their own sake, which is important in terms of responsiveness, but in terms of extending operational reach.[22] Army forces can extend their effectiveness across a

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FM 3-0 is transformation doctrine for a transforming force. It is a significant shift from its predecessors, although it would be wrong to label it as revolutionary. To use an analogy, FM 3-0 is like the howitzer, ship, or bomber that returns to the factory for a service life extension overhaul. Every piece is disassembled and renewed, or it is replaced with something that is a generation ahead of the old system. What emerges from the factory retains the original's appearance and basic function; however, the updated platform can perform its mission more effectively in changed operational conditions. FM 3-0 is that kind of doctrine. It contains much that is old and familiar but contains a great deal that is new. It addresses the operating environment of today while anticipating the requirements of tomorrow. It is a stepping-stone to the doctrine that will drive Objective Force operations. FM 3-0 also provides a firm basis that Army forces can use to conduct full-spectrum operations today. *MR*

NOTES

1. U.S. Army Field Manual (FM) 3-0, *Operations* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office [GPO], 14 June 2001).
2. FM 100-5, *Operations* (Washington, DC: GPO, 14 June 1993).
3. FM 1, *The Army* (Washington, DC: GPO, 14 June 2001).
4. FM 100-1, *The Army* (Washington, DC: GPO, 14 June 1994).
5. The FM 3-0 writing team originally intended to follow the release of a new edition of Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, *Joint Operations*. The FM 3-0 authors not only reviewed all JP 3-0 drafts, they also embodied language from those drafts throughout FM 3-0.
6. FM 3-90, *Tactics* (Washington, DC: GPO, 4 July 2001).
7. FM 3-06, *Urban Operations* (Washington, DC: GPO, TBP); FM 3-07, *Stability Operations and Support Operations* (Washington, DC: GPO, TBP); FM 3-13, *Information Operations* (Washington, DC: GPO, TBP); FM 5-0, *Army Planning and Orders Production* (Washington, DC: GPO, TBP); FM 6-0, *Command and Control* (Washington, DC: GPO, TBP); FM 7-15, *Army Universal Task List (AUTL)* (Washington, DC: GPO, TBP).
8. FM 1-0, *Personnel* (Washington, DC: GPO, TBP); FM 2-0, *Intelligence Operations* (Washington, DC: GPO, TBP); FM 4-0, *Combat Service Support* (Washington, DC: TBP); FM 7-0, *Training the Force* (Washington, DC: TBP).
9. The current edition of JP 3-0 was published in 1995. Before that, joint publications were essentially recapitulations of service procedures. Compounding the problem, joint doctrine was difficult to obtain and doctrine on hand was often out of date. The 1993 version of FM 100-5 influenced the current JP 3-0 heavily. Since 1995, joint doctrine has undergone a revolution, and joint doctrine now establishes the bounds of Army doctrine.

10. FM 3-0, Foreword.
11. John L. Romjue, *American Army Doctrine for the Post-Cold War World* (Fort Monroe, VA: Military History Office, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, 1996).
12. FM 3-0, chapter 1, paragraph 1-33.
13. Ibid., chapter 1, paragraph 1-18.
14. FM 1, chapter 3.
15. FM 3-0, chapter 1, paragraph 1-52 and chapter 3, paragraph 3-35.
16. Ibid., chapter 4, paragraph 4-10.
17. Ibid., chapter 1, paragraph 1-47.
18. The 1982 construct of deep, close, and rear operations was intended for division and higher operations. The 1986 FM 100-5 elevated the focus of deep, close, and rear operations to the corps and echelons above corps, although divisions continued to organize their operations accordingly. However, that doctrine did not envision brigades and lower echelons conducting deep operations—lower echelons than divisions conducted close operations. The distinction between deep, close, and rear all related to the existence of a more or less distinguishable forward line of own troops created by the array of forces side by side. This construct breaks down in terms of modern operations where smaller Army forces are conducting more nonlinear and noncontiguous operations as integral components of joint task forces.
19. FM 3-0, chapter 4, paragraph 4-28.
20. Ibid., chapter 11, paragraph 11-87.
21. Ibid., chapter 12, paragraph 12-4.
22. Ibid., chapter 5, paragraph 5-41. Operational reach is the distance over which military power can be employed decisively; it is a tether.

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